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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-15 and 17-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1, 13-15, 19, and 21 and cancel claim 16.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the numbering of the claims because the claims, as originally filed, included two claims numbered 11. Applicants have renumbered the second claim 11 and claims 12-20 as claims 12-21, respectively. Accordingly, the claims will only be referred to hereafter as renumbered.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 5, 7 and 13-16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6, 8-12 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hirasawa et al. (U.S. 6,555,763). On page 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hirasawa et al. in view of Ehman et al. (U.S. 6,021,050). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 1-4, 6, 8-12, and 17-21.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 16. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Hirasawa et al. is moot. Allowable claim 13 has been amended to be in independent form, incorporating the features of claim 1 and allowable claim 16. Accordingly, claim 16 has been canceled.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 13 are allowable. Claims 2-12, 14, 15, and 17-21 depend upon claims 1 and 13, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claims 1 and 13 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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